

The Pocahontas Times.

If thou would'st read a lesson that will keep Thy heart from fainting and thy soul from sleep, Go to the woods and hills.—Longfellow.

Vol. 22 No. 5.

Marlinton, Pocahontas County, West Virginia June 2, 1904.

\$1.00 a Year

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T. S. McNEEL,

STREAMS I HAVE FISHED.

*North Fork of Cranberry.

The North Fork of Cranberry heads on Black Mountain, flows through a country of virginia timber its whole length. It mingles its limpid waters with the muddy waters of the Gladly Fork and forms Cranberry River. Some call Gladly Fork the South Prong but I prefer the name Gladly as it is descriptive of the remarkable bog through which the stream winds its sluggish way and by which it is defined.

Certainly those who named the North Fork suffered from a poverty of names for no stream better deserves a better name. These names gradually became fixed until there is no hope of changing them. We have heard of one West Virginia stream which labors under the name of the Left Hand Fork of the Right Hand Fork of the Bailey Fork of Poca River.

A stream preserves its identity as long as it does not enter a larger stream going down, and in going up stream until its waters divide evenly and then if the name lives at all it is with the name "fork" or "prong" attached for descriptive qualities. Prong is probably the better word of the two.

The Indians were more poetical than we in the naming of streams and it may be presumed that when they used to idle on those waters that they spoke of as the Willwaha or Sparkling Waters.

We hear a good deal about silvery waters of a good many streams but the water of the North Fork is like gold. I do not suppose there is mud enough in the bed of the stream to make one brick.

The water flows over yellow stones and is the color of weak tea. When dipped up in a glass it is as clear as crystal. The water is cold. It foams and plunges over the rocks and every microbe is dashed to pieces. It is soft to the taste and certainly has medicinal properties. I have used that water for some days and always came away much refreshed and benefited. It was once at the best hotel in Philadelphia and a friend ordered a bottle of Poland water at great expense to himself, to wit, seventy five cents and we consumed that bottle from out its nest in a pail of ice. But the minute I drank of its soft alkali contents I recognized the unmistakable taste of the waters of North Fork and Tea Creek, and I may add that it had the same effect.

Think of a large stream with its unnumbered branches on the waters of which never a tree has been cut except for a camp or camp fire! Such is the valley of the North Fork. And the timber is the heavy timber of the Spruce Woods. Untold wealth is bound up in those trees.

It is a forest primeval. I got this expression while traveling one day on the train and thought it was a good word to try on some of your people some day. It was some time ago. I had attended the theater in one of our inland towns and harked to a most harrowing tale of blue ruin and sudden death. The next morning the whole troupe traveled my way. The leading lady became very sick and I was greatly interested in the simple but effective treatment prescribed by the stage manager. It was several fingers of an amber colored fluid. It seemed to restore the lady to robust health.

She sat up and looked out of the window. We were passing through dense pine woods. "Still stands the forest primeval!" she observed dramatically and she kept saying it over again until I got it by heart and here I am retelling it. I wish I knew the name of them drops.

There are fish in the North Fork. Salmo fontinalis sometimes called trout. The water is so clear that it is but a continuation of the air so far as sight is concerned and the fisherman must be careful not to become too prominent. He must fit into the surrounding landscape.

When he has secured a suitable background, or hid behind a bush, or lain down behind a stone, he may venture a cast near the shelving rock where the trout lies hid. The trout darts out to add the strange insect to his collection but he also casts an eye to windward and if the man has on a billed shirt, a brass button, or a diamond ring or anything else that glitters back the trout goes and no business can be done with him.

The trout of this stream are very beautifully marked in red and black. All of the red streams affect the trout in this way. Dull

colored waters make dull colored fish.

The largest trout I ever caught was in North Fork about one mile from the forks. There is a large pool there with a ring of rocks around the head. A tow head below gives an opportunity for a back cast. One day as I came down the stream I cleared away some bushes with my knife and next morning reached the pool just about the time the sun was glinting through the trees. I cast some fifty feet of line into the center of the pool. The flies fell on the water, the trout came. At the same time the water boiled and a handsome contention I drew a fourteen inch trout from the water. The trout was thick, corpulent fish and was the heaviest trout of the some ten thousand trout I have ruthlessly destroyed in my time.

This fish I am glad to say was caught in this style. It was brought up from the very bottom of a deep pool to take a fly on the surface and owing to the length of line and the elbow room it made a great fight. I have always regretted that I did not save its front teeth for tooth picks.

One day after the waters were subsiding from a big flood I walked up stream about a mile and a half. The stream never gets muddy no matter how high it is. This day the stage of water seemed to be just right. The camp was in great need of fish as the high water had prevented good catches from being made, and in camp in that section trout take the place of bread, butter, meat and potatoes.

I fished down and every pool seemed to be alive with fish. I caught a great weight and entirely filled the basket. When I got in I found that I had caught just an even hundred.

An hours walk from the forks is the largest pool of the creek. A big rock pitches down into the water at the upper right hand corner of the pool. I caught a twelve inch trout in the tail here and he drew away from me with every paddle working and I thought I had hooked a four pounder.

I fished over two hours for a big trout in a pool in this stream one day and caught it. This stream is about ten miles long. It is possible to walk the entire distance in one day and do some fishing. I tried it one day last summer. It is surprising how comfortable a bed the ground makes after such a day's work. Without even a dry pair of socks we lay with our feet to a camp fire and I do not believe that I ever had a better night's rest in my life.

Since the inconsiderate capitalists have taken to building cities like Richwood in the heart of this wilderness the fishing on Cranberry has been ruined. The trail of the destroyer is plainly marked along the banks of the stream, and we Pocahontas people have to share the fishing with aliens from Nicholas. I think if I owned that country I would put a fence around it. The fence should be built of iron bars with glass posts. Then I would harness the North Fork and run the biggest dynamo that money could procure and run the current along the bars of my fence so when a Richwood man came along I could send him back home so full of electricity that his friends would not know him, and he would blame it all on them high altitudes. This may shock the reader but not to the extent I would shock them aliens from Nicholas.

A number of boys about town have reached the age when making a collection appeals to them, and at present it is Indian relics. A lot of fine specimens have been found, beside many which are neither fine nor perfect, but are interesting inasmuch as they show the different stages of the work as it advanced to the completion of the arrowhead. The making of the arrowhead and other stone implements was a lost art long before the Indian was made extinct. The bow and arrow was still in use by the Western Indians thirty or forty years ago, but their arrows then were pointed usually with iron, obtainable at the trading posts of the fur company.

In the museum of the Smithsonian Institution at Washington are a large number of skulls of men who had been killed by arrow shots through the head. These arrows were either of iron or of bone, and oftentimes would go entirely through the head, showing what deadly weapons they were in the hands of an adept.

A reunion of the Spanish-American war veterans is proposed and Wheeling is the place suggested.

DAN CUNNINGHAM.

RAMUEL HOPKINS ADAMS IN McCLURE'S MAGAZINE.

An Account From the June Number of a Well Known Literary Magazine.

Kentucky and West Virginia have, in recent years, given to the old-world terms "feud" and "clan" an unsavory familiarity in American records. Apparently the law has been unable to cope with this manifestation of barbarism. The clan has entered politics, and when it has wrought the vengeance of its feud, politics has protected it. But here and there a man has risen up against the clan to fight it; single-handed generally, to the shame of his community.

Such a man is Dan Cunningham, United States Deputy Marshal in one of the most lawless regions of America, the Second District of West Virginia. Cunningham is a one-ided man; a fighter of one weapon. A mission of revenge dominates his life, and his weapon is the law.

In 1877 Cunningham, then a quiet studious youth, wrapped up in his books, was teaching school in Jackson County, West Virginia. In a law-despising community, he was bred to a reverence of the law. His grandfather had organized the government of the county and had been its first sheriff; his father was for twenty years Justice of the Peace, a peace often preserved from anarchy by his own courage and force of character, and his older brother, Nathan, was at this time Deputy Marshal, Anglo-Saxons of the stern, steadfast type were these Cunninghams, fighting men to be dreaded in defense of their own rights and the rights of others.

A few years before, Jackson County had suffered an irruption of outcast Virginians, who had "refused" to employ the suggestive local word—from a mountain gain in the old state, when their misdeeds made it too hot for them there. The Skegns, the Counts, the Kisers, the Fields, and their families had trailed after them a record of crime ranging from murder and arson down to petty larceny. No sooner had they settled in the West Virginia county than they recognized in the Cunningham family, as the wolf in the dog's, their natural enemies. At first they tried to conciliate the Cunninghams with a proffered "political" alliance, designed to further their schemes of land robbery by intimidation, and if necessary, the murder of the agents from the outer world. This offer was rejected. The clan formed a secret organization called the Consolidated Band, for mutual protection in whatever enterprises might be undertaken, principally moonshining (the manufacture of illicit whisky) and murder; and this band determined upon the "removal" of the Cunninghams. Shortly thereafter Nathan defended his house against thirty of the band armed with rifles. Then they adopted strategic measures.

In the fallen term of school (1877) Dan Cunningham, walking home with his books under his arm, heard the sobbing of a child by the wayside. He found his little niece clasping the body of her father. Nathan had been beaten to death with rocks, having first been shot, and the child coming along the road, had found him dying, surrounded by the members of the gang. In his last flicker of consciousness he had begged her to bring water from the creek; but two of the murderers caught and held her, and her father died before her eyes. The two were Wade Counts and Joe Kiser; so much in her dazed shock and misery she told her young uncle. Counts and Kiser were arrested. The Consolidated Band rallied to an overwhelming alibi resulting in their triumphant release at the preliminary hearing. The young school master followed alibi and presented evidence to prove its falsity. The prosecuting attorney would not move upon it. Cunningham received secret warning that if he valued his own life and that of his family, he would drop the matter. His answer was to collect more evidence and present it again. Still the authorities refused to move.

"If my case isn't strong enough," said the schoolmaster, "I'll make it stronger. I can afford to spend ten years on this."

The official to whom he spoke knew the Cunningham breed. "Don't do it, Dan," he begged.

"If we really try to convict those fellows the Band will make a slaughter-house of the county."

"Then there's no help from the law!" said the young school-teacher.

"Well," said the official, "there's other ways—you know a gun when you see it."

A MORTAL CRISIS.

That day Dan Cunningham's fate hung in the balance. His brother's blood cried for vengeance; how insistently none can know but him who understands the blood-loyalty of the mountaineer. On the other side was the brave and honorable record of his family, the impulse to what we call civic righteousness. An outlaw hunter of outlaws, or a patient fugitive until the law's time should come!

Dan Cunningham picked his books and left the glen where he was born and bred, and the Consolidated Band thought it had scared away a coward—and made little account of it.

THE EVOLUTION OF A SCHOOL TEACHER.

For ten years he taught school in Roane, Putnam, and Kanawha Counties. School teaching was all he knew, and he had to make a living while learning certain things that the normal schools don't teach: such as rifle and revolver shooting, woodcraft, mountain-trailing, and the tricks of the moonshiners. For Dan Cunningham wanted a job under the United States government. Local law—the law that his breed had established and defended at the risk of their lives—had failed him. He would try Uncle Sam's law. He shrewdly suspected that the Band would be moonshining. The band gaining prestige from the successful murder of Nathan Cunningham, had by terrorizing and political weight strengthened their hold on the county until, in 1887, they dominated it completely. They were thoroughly organized on the clan principle, with a "legal adviser" and a "spiritual adviser." Murderers of the most brutal kind were laid to the Band's account. Robbery, arson, and other crimes were credited to its various members. Nobody dared bear testimony against them; the death rate among their enemies was too high. Their distilling industries and their land-grabbing were making them prosperous; it was their weather for the clan.

THE RETURN OF DAN CUNNINGHAM.

One day there appeared in the village which they made their headquarters, a long, lank, solemn looking man with a slight slouch which entirely failed to conceal his obvious physical power and agility. He wore a sober black suit, a linen shirt, and a black tie. He immediately received the greeting due to an itinerant preacher in a district where opportunities for religious exercises are scarce. One of the lesser lights of the clan came out to greet him—for they are emotionally religious, these strange murderers—and recognized Dan Cunningham.

"Lookin' fer a school, Dan?" he asked.

"Old trouble all forgot, eh?" Cunningham looked him in the eye.

"I haven't forgotten it," he said. "Nathan is still dead. Tell your gang that."

The gang was told. They were not told that he had returned as United States Deputy Marshal.

A few nights later, with two assistants, one of whom was named Duff, Cunningham lay on the bank of one of the wild ravines which cut that country into strips, and looked down upon a revel by the men and women of the clan around one of their stills. In his diary there is a brief description of the orgy; none of it is quotable, but it is summed up in a characteristic and illuminating comment:

"Hell's headquarters is sure in Jackson County."

With the evidence collected Cunningham swore out warrants and arrested the leaders of the gang. Then he and his men wrecked the still. The band notified him that he would not live a week, and presently he was shot at from ambush. He raised two more stills and sent word to the Band that he would have every man of them behind the bars—unless hell gets you first," he told them. As a beginning he secured the conviction of two of the Kisers and one Counts. Public opinion began to arouse itself. As the Band invulnerably, after all, it would seem not, when one man could defy the power which had terrorized a county, recognizing that their prestige was in peril, the clan made an elaborate attempt to entrap Cunningham, with the result that another still was ruined and one of their number jailed.

Something like superstitious terror seems to have beset them now. Incredible as it may seem, the Band hastily broke up, abandoned its illicit traffic and its stolen land, and emigrated to Roane County. Cunningham's first victory was won. He made his report and asked to be detailed to Roane County. There might, he naively told the government, be some moonshine business going on there; in fact he rather thought there was.

In Harpers District, Roane County, lived the Rev. T. P. Ryan, generally known—although a Methodist—as Father Ryan.

He was a man of clean and upright life, a hater of crime and disorder, and a fearless preacher. Therefore the unerring instinct of the clan saw in him an enemy. He was shot to death through the window of his own house, and before the murder was committed the Skegns and Counts settlement, twelve miles distant, knew all about it. Long before the news could have reached their settlement the gang were armed and en route to the spot, to accuse and "arrest" the Duff boys and a man named Coon, all of whom had been associated with Cunningham in raiding the Jackson county illicit stills. After a mock trial, in secret session, they shot George Duff to death, hanged Coon, and cut Robert Duff's throat in the presence of his wife.

As soon as he learned of this, Cunningham started for Roane county. Here was his chance to secure a conviction for murder against the slayers of his brother. He collected the evidence, even to the proceedings and the pass-word of the meeting which sentenced the victims, and was about to present them, when, to his amazement, he learned that a warrant had been sworn out charging him with the murder of Father Ryan. To be taken then meant the same death that had been meted out to his friends. For the first and only time in his life, Cunningham evaded the law. He made good his escape while the clan was gathering. The prosecuting attorney, who had married the niece of one of the Consolidated Band, sent word that if the United States Deputy Marshal would agree to keep away from Roane county, the case would be nolle. The answer was prompt: Cunningham would be there when the case came on, and he would bring protection against lynching but not against any due process of law.

The case was called. Witnesses had been subpoenaed to swear that they saw Cunningham fire the shot. Some fled; some were stricken silent; none testified. The jury returned a verdict of acquittal without leaving their seats. Now came Cunningham's inning. With his evidence of the murders of Duff and Coon he went to the prosecuting attorney. That official refused to proceed against the murderers. The innocent, he said, had decided that the victims came to their death "at the hands of parties unknown." "Very well," said Cunningham. "This is another Jackson County. I'll wait for them to commit federal crimes."

CUNNINGHAM "WAITS"

The "federal" crimes were committed—post-office robberies, moonshining, and counterfeiting. One by one Cunningham got his men. Once he met on a lonely roadway one of the elder Kisers who had borne a part in the slaying of Nathan. By way of precaution Cunningham covered him with his revolver. Kiser fell to his knees and began to pray.

"Get up," said the marshal. "If I wanted to kill you and your like, couldn't I have done it a hundred times? Go on—and don't turn round."

Word went about the country side that Dan Cunningham was "wilted" against bullet and poison. Both had been tried by the Band, and both had failed. The bullet, fired with a close and steady aim from ambush by the crack-shot of a clan which sleeps with its rifles, cut through the breast of his coat, barely burning the skin; the arsenic, skillfully prepared in an apple by the "varb-witch" of the Band, he tried on a hen, and watched the hen die. Then he went out and arrested two young hopefuls of the Skean family for petty larceny.

By repeated arrests and minor convictions he broke up the Consolidated Band in Roane County. They split, a few remaining in their glen, but too weakened and cowed to be any longer a menace to the district. One faction went down into Tennessee and infected a locality there with their malignant criminality. Later, when Cunningham had a vacation, he

followed them there, took up cases which the careless of frightened local official had let alone, and landed the criminals in jail. Another branch took refuge with the Hatfields, to whom they were related. Cunningham investigated that widely-feared clan, and in the course of his investigations turned over one Hatfield to be hanged, and captured another man to man, with his bare hands. Wherever he heard of a criminal act implicating any of his brother's murderers or their friends, there he went to secure a conviction. And once in so often back he goes to Roane County to present again his case against the murderers of the Duff boys. Always with the same negative result. The entry in his diary of one of these failures is followed by this note:

"Some day there will be a new prosecuting attorney in Roane County, then I will get Nathan's murderers."

CHANCE THAT WAS NOT ACCEPTED.

There came a time when the event lay in Cunningham's hands. In Parkersburg, W. Va., he found, lying senseless on the railroad track, the official who stood between him and his twenty-year deferred vengeance. There was a train within hearing. He had

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Baseball.

Baseball is high favor at Marlinton this year and practice games are had once or twice a week. There is enough material—and good material, too—to organize a first and second team and have match games each Saturday. Without match games, practice soon loses its flavor and falls flat. Outdoor athletics form a too important part in the society of the Anglo-Saxon race to be neglected. It is the one thing which will retard the tendency toward effeminacy which marks the course of the twentieth century man, and gives that training to eye, arm, nerve and temper that is lacking in the daily occupation of the average individual and for which there is a long felt want. It is the duty of every one, from a religious, moral and patriotic standpoint to give his encouragement to manly sports. A strong, healthy body is acknowledged the most perfect gift, and a man properly trained in mind and muscle is less likely to fall before temptation. Though never called in defense of country he who is schooled in and made strong by athletic exercise is more fitted for the every day duties of citizenship than he who shakes in every wind that blows. Baseball is all things to all men: it makes the lean fat and reduces the flesh of the stout man, brings sleep to the nervous, opens the eyes of the sluggard, tones the liver, brightens the eyes and makes eating a pleasure. It is more especially important for the growing boy than those of us who have settled down into our own peculiar ruts, inasmuch as his mind and body is more susceptible to training, and will keep him from loafing by anticipation before the game, occupying his time fully while engaged in it, and resting up afterwards. Then, too, it behooves us to keep up our record in outdoor sports for the reputation of the town. Marlinton is fast assuming proportions which will claim her a place among the cities of the land, and it is to be sincerely hoped that when the other towns shall cast about them for an antagonist worthy of the name our young men will be strong to go forth to do them battle and bring back many trophies, not for greed of gain but for the honor of our ladies, than whom there is none so fair, for the advancement of civility, and the love of good, clean sport.

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5-26-2

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